Aden

175
[312] That Aden still possessed some fine buildings even as late as 1710 we know from the record left by a French traveller who, after referring to the "handsome" aqueduct which had been built originally in 1500 to bring water into the town from Sheikh Othman ten miles away, and deploring the state of the fortifications, referred to the town in the following terms:

[342] "The city is still considerably large and one may still see
[349] several handsome houses two storeys high with flat roofs, but
[368] there is also an abundance of rubbish and ruins. It must be
[532] owned that there is nothing finer of its kind than the baths there. They are lined with marble or jasper and covered with a handsome dome, having a hole at the top to let in light, and adorned on the inside with galleries supported by magnificent pillars."[1]

178 There was no sign of this delightful place when I arrived,
368 nor were there any public baths, swimming or otherwise, until
346 twenty-four years later when I opened the handsome Municipal Swimming Bath in Holkat Bay, but by 1931 Aden was by no means in an "exigent condition of poverty and neglect". Far from it; it was a flourishing town, though all that remained of the ancient splendour was the tall white minaret in Crater overlooking what is now the Football Stadium. A lonely ghost from the past whose mosque has long since disappeared.

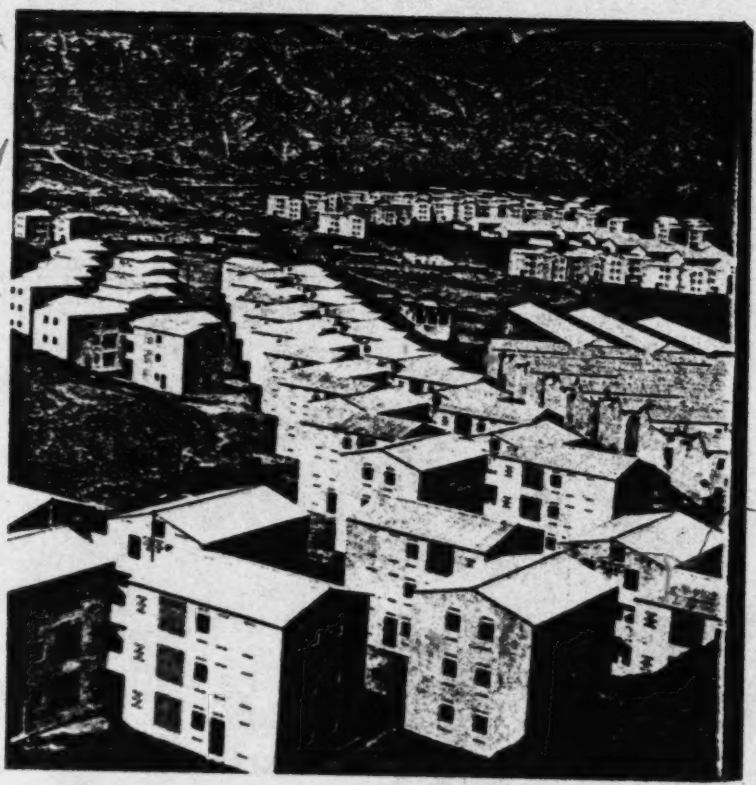
000 My disagreeable first impression remains with many travellers for the rest of their lives and the mere mention of the name Aden is sufficient to conjure up in their imaginations an exaggerated recollection of heat, haze and noise and, above all, a barrenness beyond belief.

312 In the early nineteen-thirties fresh water from wells in the village of Sheikh Othman had only recently been brought in to the main town and the population were still dependent mainly on condensed water for drinking purposes, and there was virtually no water at all for gardens or any other form of
000 cultivation. Only a few like myself succeeded in penetrating the haze and forgetting the lack of vegetation and the discomfort of prickly heat, as we became more and more absorbed with the people and their problems and travelled beyond the

[1] Dr. J. C. Young, *Ancient History of Aden*, 1923.

2: Hickinbotham G-4, 5 (ca. 1931-ca. 1957)
1958 MM1 Aden MM1

362
342



GOVERNMENT HOUSING SCHEME 1955–56. BLOCKS OF FLATS FOR WORKERS AND THEIR FAMILIES

(By courtesy of the P.R.O., Aden)

[facing p. 147]

3:Gt. Brit. . Colonial Office G-3 (1938) 1940 MM1 Aden MM1

743 A small Lunatic Asylum is situated outside the walls of the Civil
758 Hospital and is administered from it.

[744] The Port Health work is a very important feature in the medical and sanitary organization of the Colony. The proximity of Aden by sea to ports which are subject to periodic infections makes the careful inspection of vessels a vital matter, and in addition the services of the Port Health Officer are in constant demand to assist the masters of the many cargo ships which use the port and carry no doctor. Passengers and members of the crews requiring hospital treatment are accommodated in the European General Hospital, or, if the illness is an infectious one, in suitable isolation. A few cases of chickenpox and three cases of modified smallpox were landed from shipping during 1938.

743 In the European General Hospital 66 residents of Aden and 155
744 patients from ships were treated as in-patients during the year. In all 23 different nationalities were represented.

During 1938, 2,178 Bills of Health were issued to mechanically propelled vessels and 1,609 to native craft.

V.—HOUSING

General

342 Houses in Aden are of stone masonry, except at Sheikh Othman
647 where they are mostly built with sun-dried bricks.

656 The control of housing in Aden is vested in the Executive Committee of the Settlement, and plans for new buildings and reconstructions are passed by them after scrutiny by the Medical Officer of Health and the Settlement Engineer.

Particular attention is paid to efficient lighting and ventilation. Each residential building is provided with sanitary and kitchen accommodation separated from the living rooms by open court-yards or by large shafts open to the sky.

Most of the houses are provided with floors made of cement-concrete; this is insisted upon in all new buildings, and the height of the houses is never allowed to exceed the width of the streets.

Back-to-back houses are not allowed; a few still exist in the village of Maala, but these are being demolished as opportunity occurs.

[514
364] At the rear of all houses there are open spaces from 5 ft. to 10 ft. wide. They are called sweeper passages, and the sanitary accommodation of the houses abuts on to these spaces and is drained into them. Each such passage is connected with the main drainage system in all divisions of the Settlement except Maala, where it is connected with a large soak pit.

Every building plan is carefully scrutinized by the Public Health Department before construction is allowed.

3:Gt. Brit. . Colonial Office G-3 (1938) 1940 MM1 Aden MM1

Most of the dwelling-houses within the Settlement limits are well ventilated and lighted and are satisfactory from a public health point of view. Endeavours are being made to effect an improvement in architectural standards.

There are still a few buildings in Maala and Sheikh Othman where the old type of house exists, but improvement grows every year by demolition and reconstruction, and the majority of the population is comfortably housed.

Water Supply

The water supply of Aden is obtained from six bore-wells situated near the village of Sheikh Othman. The supply for the civil population is pumped into two tanks each of 100,000 gallons capacity, and from these tanks the supply gravitates through a 15-in. main to a storage reservoir of 400,000 gallons capacity at the Isthmus.

The total amount of water raised from these bore holes during 1938 was 236,178,000 gallons. This represents an average daily supply of 647,000 gallons, and taking the population as 47,000 an average of 14 gallons per head per day for all purposes.

The following table gives details of the water used in Aden during the years 1936, 1937 and 1938.

Details of water.	*1936.*	*1937.*	*1938.*
Total water raised at bore-holes.	204,887,000	207,368,000	236,178,000
Total water delivered to Fortress area.	118,429,000	121,980,000	133,525,000
Total water delivered to Military.	25,520,000*	23,671,000	27,564,000
Total water sold for Shipping purposes.	18,489,000	20,704,000	21,273,000
Total water used for gardens	76,992,000	84,383,000	98,087,000
Water unaccounted, for per cent. loss.	32·9 per cent.	23·0 per cent.	21·19 per cent.

* This high figure was due to the extra number of Military temporarily drafted to Aden in 1936.

The increase in the consumption of water for all purposes is due chiefly to the extension of the distribution mains.

Maintenance Work

The majority of the work carried out by the Water and Drainage Department comes under the above heading and includes the following:—

(1) *Pumping plant.*—This comprises five reciprocating and five centrifugal pumps, all of which have been examined regularly and kept in good mechanical order. These pumps work on an average of 12 hours a day, and the supply was not once interrupted during the year.

4:Gt. Brit. . Colonial Office G-3 (1937) 1939 MM1 Aden MM1

mumps occur from time to time and are treated in the infectious diseases hospital on Maala plain.

A small lunatic asylum is situated outside the walls of the Civil Hospital and is administered from it.

The port health work is a very important feature in the medical and sanitary organization of the Colony. The proximity of Aden by sea to ports which are subject to periodic infections makes the careful inspection of vessels a vital matter, and in addition the services of the Port Health Officer are in constant demand to assist the masters of the many cargo ships carrying no doctor which use the port. Passengers and members of the crew requiring hospital treatment are accommodated in the European General Hospital or, if the illness is an infectious one, in suitable isolation. It is usual to have patients of four or five different nationalities, European and Eastern, in the wards at the same time, which is a compliment to the hospital and indicative of the service it renders to shipping, but tests very thoroughly the linguistic capabilities of the staff.

During 1937 2,274 bills of health were issued to mechanically-propelled vessels and 1,222 to native craft.

V.—HOUSING.

General.

Houses in Aden are of stone masonry, except at Sheikh Othman where mostly they are built with sun-dried bricks.

In every case particular attention is paid to efficient lighting and ventilation. Each residential quarter is provided with proper sanitary accommodation and kitchen which are suitably detached from the living-rooms by large and open court-yards or by large shafts open to the sky.

Most of the houses are provided with floors made of cement-concrete; this is insisted upon in all new proposals, and the height of the houses is never allowed to exceed the width of the streets.

Back-to-back houses are not allowed; a few still exist in the village of Maala, but these are being eradicated as opportunity occurs.

At the rear of all houses there are open spaces from 5 ft. to 10 ft. wide. They are called sweeper passages, and the sanitary accommodations abut on to these spaces and drain into them. Each such passage is connected with the main drainage system in all divisions of the Settlement except Maala, where it is connected with a big soak-away pit.

With these aims every building plan is carefully scrutinized by the Public Health Department before it is allowed to be constructed.

Most of the dwelling-houses within the Settlement limits are well ventilated and lighted and are satisfactory from a public health point of view. Endeavours are being made to effect an improvement in the architectural standard of the buildings.

5:Gt. Brit., Colonial Office G-3 (1947) 1949 MM1 Aden MM1

164 165

Causes of Deaths in 1947

Diseases	*Deaths*
Smallpox	—
Malaria	37
Enteric Fever	5
Other Fevers	223
Dysentery	16
Diarrhoea	265
Phthisis	244
Other Respiratory Diseases	240
Injuries	75
Deaths from child-birth	17
All other causes	701
Birth-rate	30·43
Death-rate: Crude	23·50
Actual	18·59

HOUSING

362 There are four types of housing in the Colony:

●342 (*a*) Well-built bungalows or two-storeyed houses of European design, owned by Government or commercial firms and occupied chiefly by Government officials and the European mercantile community.

(*b*) Well-built multi-storeyed stone in lime-mortar structures, owned by the wealthier type of merchant, most of which are owner-occupied.

(*c*) Single- and two-storeyed buildings constructed of rubble stone jointed with mud (clay) mortar. Quite a number of these are also owner-occupied.

(*d*) Single-storeyed "mud brick" buildings. These are situated mostly in Sheikh Othman and many are owner-occupied.

342 [132] All four types have flat timber roofs covered with lime concrete or rammed clay. Pitched roofs are rare, as the average annual rainfall is less than 2 inches, and the roofs are used for sleeping purposes during the hot season.

There is a fifth type constructed of reeds, palm leaves, branches of trees, corrugated iron, and known as *kutcha* dwellings. (*Kutcha* is a Hindustani word meaning "of poor construction".)

362 A slum clearance and rehousing scheme, whereby these *kutcha* huts were to be replaced gradually by mud-brick dwellings with proper sanitary arrangements, was begun under the aegis of the Aden Settlement in 1943, and this policy is being continued by Government. Up to the end of 1947, 80 of these dwellings had been constructed, and a further 116 were scheduled to be begun in 1948.

362 161 During the war and for a period afterwards, for a variety of reasons (principally large military constructional works, increase in the strength

6:Gt. Brit. . Colonial Office G-3 (1948) 1950 MM1 Aden M M1

Training

759 This year has seen a considerable extension of facilities for training. One Senior Assistant Medical Officer was absent on study leave for the greater part of the year to take a post-graduate course. He has since obtained the F.R.F.P.S. (Glasgow). One Arab student proceeded to Birmingham University to take a medical course. Two hospital assistants were sent to the United Kingdom for three years' training as male nurses.

One hospital assistant was enrolled at a London hospital for one year's training as laboratory technician.

One Sanitary Inspector proceeded to Bombay to take a six-month course of training prior to examination for the Sanitary Inspector's Certificate of the Royal Sanitary Institute.

161 *Vital Statistics*: 1948

163

Population—1946 Census	82,359
Births	2,192
165 Birth-rate	26·61 per thousand
Deaths	1,360 (338 non-residents)
Death-rate	20·62 per thousand
Deaths under one year of age	385
Infant Mortality Rate	171·18 per thousand
Still-births	125

342 HOUSING

362 There are four types of housing in the Colony:

(*a*) Well-built bungalows or two-storeyed houses of European design, owned by Government or commercial firms and occupied chiefly by Government officials and the European mercantile community.

(*b*) Well-built multi-storeyed stone in lime-mortar structures, owned by the wealthier type of merchant, most of which are owner-occupied.

(*c*) Single and two-storeyed buildings constructed of rubble stone jointed with mud (clay) mortar. Quite a number of these are also owner-occupied.

(*d*) Single-storeyed "mud brick" buildings. These are situated mostly in Sheikh Othman and many are owner-occupied.

All four types have flat timber roofs covered with lime concrete or rammed clay. Pitched roofs are rare, as the average annual rainfall is less than 2 inches, and the roofs are used for sleeping purposes during the hot season.

There is a fifth type constructed of reeds, palm leaves, branches of trees, corrugated iron, and known as *kutcha* dwellings. (*Kutcha* is a Hindustani word meaning "of poor construction".)

362 A slum clearance and rehousing scheme, whereby these *kutcha* huts were to be replaced gradually by mud-brick dwellings with proper sani-

7: Gt. Brit., Colonial Office G-3 (1949-50) 1951 MM1 Aden mm1

The rapidly growing demand for in-patient and out-patient care at the Clinic has created a situation which can only be met by providing increased accommodation and staff. Plans to meet these needs are under consideration. 743

Training 759

One Senior Assistant Medical Officer obtained the Diploma in Ophthalmic Medicine and Surgery (London); one attended a six months' refresher course at Edinburgh on skin and venereal diseases; and a third proceeded to Glasgow to study for a diploma in radiology

One female and one male nurse went to the United Kingdom for training. This was the first time an Arabian female nurse had been sent from Aden for training. The total number of nurses now training in British hospitals is four males and one female.

In addition two Arab males were awarded scholarships in medicine and both are studying in the United Kingdom.

VITAL STATISTICS; 1949 161

Population (estimated) ..	100,000 163
Births	2,553
Birth-rate	25·53 per thousand 165
Deaths	1,658 (376 non-residents included)
Death-rate	16·58 per thousand
Deaths under one year of age	413
Infant Mortality Rate (excluding imported cases) ..	158·63 per thousand live births
Still-birth rate	54 per thousand total births

Throughout the period, the Principal Medical Officer, British Forces, and his staff have rendered most valuable assistance in dealing with medical and health problems and this generous and friendly co-operation has been greatly appreciated; and without the skilled assistance of the medical staff of the Keith Falconer Mission Hospital and the Charitable Dispensaries the department would have found it impossible to meet all the demands made upon it. 657

HOUSING

There are four types of housing in the Colony : 342

(*a*) Well built bungalows or two-storied houses of European design, owned by Government or commercial firms, and occupied chiefly by Government officials and the European mercantile community.

(*b*) Well built multi-storied stone in lime mortar structures, owned by the wealthier type of merchant, most of which are owner-occupied.

342 (c) Single and two-storied buildings constructed of rubble stone jointed with mud (clay) mortar. Quite a number of these are also owner-occupied.

(d) Single-storied "mud brick" (clay) bricks sun dried only buildings. These are situated mostly in Sheikh Othman and many are owner-occupied.

[132] All four types have flat timber roofs covered with lime concrete or rammed clay. Pitched roofs are rare, as the average annual rainfall is less than two inches, and the roofs are used for sleeping purposes during the hot season.

There is a fifth type constructed of reeds, palm, leaves, branches of trees, corrugated iron, and known as "*kutcha* dwellings." (*Kutcha* is a Hindustani word meaning "of poor construction".)

362 A slum clearance and rehousing scheme, whereby these *kutcha* huts were to be gradually replaced by mud brick dwellings with proper sanitary arrangements, was begun under the aegis of the Aden Settlement in 1943, and this policy is being continued by Government. Up to the end of 1950, 360 of these dwellings had been completed, and it is planned to begin building a further 80 in 1951.

During the war, and for a period afterwards, due to a variety of reasons (principally large military constructional works, increase in strength of the Garrison, and famine in the hinterland), the floating population increased considerably and, in the absence of proper accommodation, were perforce allowed to construct and live in *kutcha* huts in specially demarcated areas. While control is exercised as far as is possible to prevent epidemics, these areas can only be termed slum areas, and the solution would appear to be the construction by Government of several hundreds of working-class houses, and areas for this purpose are being reserved under the Town Planning Scheme.

511 362 The standard of living in these areas is very low indeed, but even this is apparently higher than in the hinterland, as no effort is being made by these people to return home, and any attempt at coercion with mass removal of the hovels would undoubtedly create serious difficulties.

SOCIAL WELFARE AND RELIEF

657 746 The Labour and Social Welfare Department began work in January, 1950, under the direction of the District Commissioner. The activities of the new department were confined largely to a study of conditions, and the presentation to Government of some reports and recommendations. The staff consists of a Labour and Welfare Officer, an Arab Assistant Welfare Officer (trained in the U.K.) and one clerk.

The services and activities usually associated with a Welfare Department are in the main not yet in existence in Aden. There are a certain number of voluntary organisations which carry out excellent work, the majority of these depending on European workers and officials.

7: Gt. Britain Colonial Office G-3 (1949-50) 1951 mm1 Aden mm1

342

OLD MATTING HOUSES IN ADEN COLONY

362

NEW WORKING-CLASS HOUSES

A Colonial Development and Welfare grant pays for one-third of the cost of these houses which are let at low rentals to rehouse people from matting huts.

p. 48 (c)

ably meager. The basic foods are usually breads, dates and milk products, supplemented by vegetables and fruits in season and by varying amounts of meat and fish. Although breads are most frequently prepared from sorghum millet (durra), other forms of millet, as well as maize, wheat and barley are widely used. Rice is generally popular, and large amounts are imported. Dates constitute one of the main food items throughout this region; date palms flourish along some wadies, but the annual crop is inadequate. Numerous types of vegetables and fruits are available in the agricultural areas.

Sheep and goats are raised in both the Colony and the Protectorate. Their milk is used extensively, but only the pastoral tribes are apt to have a sufficient supply. Cow's milk is also consumed in the Colony and in some inland districts, particularly in Western Aden Protectorate, where the grazing conditions are suitable for cattle. Camel's milk is a staple food among certain Bedouin tribes. Ghee, or clarified butter, is employed in the wealthier families. The fat from the tail tissues of the local breed of sheep, which is an important substitute in the Colony and among the eastern tribes, is almost unknown in Western Aden Protectorate. Sesame is cultivated in many areas, and the oil constitutes another source of fats. Meat is seldom consumed more than once a week, except in the more prosperous households. Fish are plentiful along the coast, and both fresh and dried fish are commonly used in the diet.

Housing

Several different types of dwellings are found in Aden Colony. In general, the standards of housing are higher than in the neighboring territories. All variations are encountered between the multistoried stone houses of the wealthy Arabs, the modern style villas of the European and official communities, and the one- or two-story structures of stone or mud brick in which most of the people live. Regardless

ADEN MM1
HADHRAMAUT MM2

A 347 of size and construction, the houses usually have flat roofs, which can be utilized during the summer months for sleeping purposes. The increase in population within recent years has led to the growth of settlements of *kutcha* huts, made of reeds, palm leaves or corrugated iron, in the outlying districts.

A 361 362 511 Some of the laborers employed in handling cargo or coal are quartered in barracks, but many live in crude hut settlements in which the sanitary conditions are a menace to both townships. Slum clearance was started in 1943, and housing programs have since been undertaken in Crater and Sheikh Othman. They are financed by the Colonial government and subsidized by grants from the British Colonial Development and Welfare funds.

H 342 361 Stone, mud brick and brushwood are utilized for building purposes in the Protectorate. The type of housing and the character of the villages in different areas are governed by the materials available and the need for making them defensible. Walled settlements predominate, but scattered dwellings surrounded by brushwood stockades are frequent in Western Aden Protectorate. In the towns the larger houses of stone or mud brick have from 3 to 6 stories, with accommodations for the livestock on the ground floor. In contrast with the elaborate dwellings of the wealthy, the homes of the tribesmen are small and rarely of more than one story. They are typically overcrowded, dark and insanitary, while the animals are often kept in close association with the family. The Bedouin in the interior use the traditional camel-hair tents, but the nomadic tribes and fisherfolk near the coast live in huts of straw, thatched palm or matting.

H 342 511 361

ENVIRONMENT AND SANITATION

Water Supplies

A 312 Water is usually scarce, except in parts of the western highlands which benefit from a heavier rainfall. The main water supply for Aden Colony is derived from 10 deep

p. 240 (B)